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# Job mobility

Job mobility and job search of employed people, including changing industry or occupation, job tenure, and changes in current job (e.g. hours).

Reference period February 2022

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Released 24/05/2022

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## Key statistics

During the year ending February 2022:

- 1.3 million people (or 9.5% of employed people) changed jobs, the highest annual job mobility rate since 2012.
- The share of job mobility remained highest for Professionals, at 22% of those who changed jobs.
- 2.1 million people left or lost a job.
- The annual retrenchment rate was 1.5%, which was the lowest annual rate on record (since 1972).

More information from the annual Participation, Job Search and Mobility (PJSM) survey is available in these topic-based releases:

- [Potential workers \(/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/potential-workers/latest-release\)](/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/potential-workers/latest-release).
- [Underemployed workers \(/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/underemployed-workers/latest-release\)](/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/underemployed-workers/latest-release) (due for release 24 June 2022).

Tables related to Underemployed workers with results from the February 2022 survey are available now in [Participation, Job Search and Mobility \(/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/participation-job-search-and-mobility-australia/latest-release\)](/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/participation-job-search-and-mobility-australia/latest-release).

Microdata from the PJSM survey for 2015 to 2022 will be available in [DataLab \(/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/datalab\)](/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/datalab) on 27 May 2022 as a supplementary file to the [Longitudinal Labour Force \(/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/available-microdata-tablebuilder/longitudinal-labour-force-australia\)](/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/available-microdata-tablebuilder/longitudinal-labour-force-australia). For more information, refer to [Microdata and TableBuilder: Participation, Job Search and Mobility \(/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/available-microdata-tablebuilder/participation-job-search-and-mobility-australia\)](/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/available-microdata-tablebuilder/participation-job-search-and-mobility-australia).

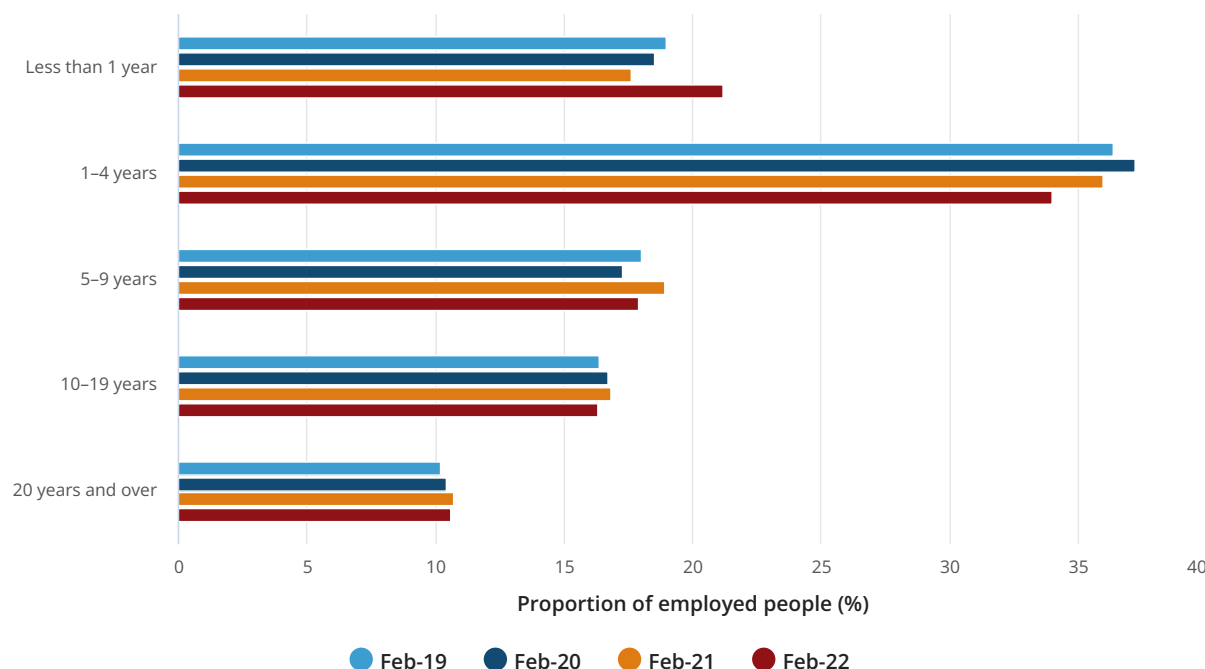
## Duration of employment

There were 13.4 million people employed in February 2022. Over half (55 per cent) had been employed in their current job for less than 5 years. About 1 in 5 (21 per cent) had been in their job for less than 1 year, up from 18 per cent in February 2021.

The proportion of those in their current job between 1 and 4 years had fallen since 2021, down from 36 per cent to 34 per cent.

About 1 in 10 employed people (11 per cent) had been in their current job for 20 years or more.

Chart 1: Duration of employment in current job



## New entrants to employment

2.8 million people started their current job in the year ending February 2022. This was an increase of 0.5 million people into employment compared to the 2.3 million people who started their job in the year ending February 2021.

Of those who started their current job in the year ending February 2022, 1.6 million entered or re-entered employment without any previous job activity during the last 12 months (i.e. they did not change jobs during the year). These 'new entrants' into employment include people who have:

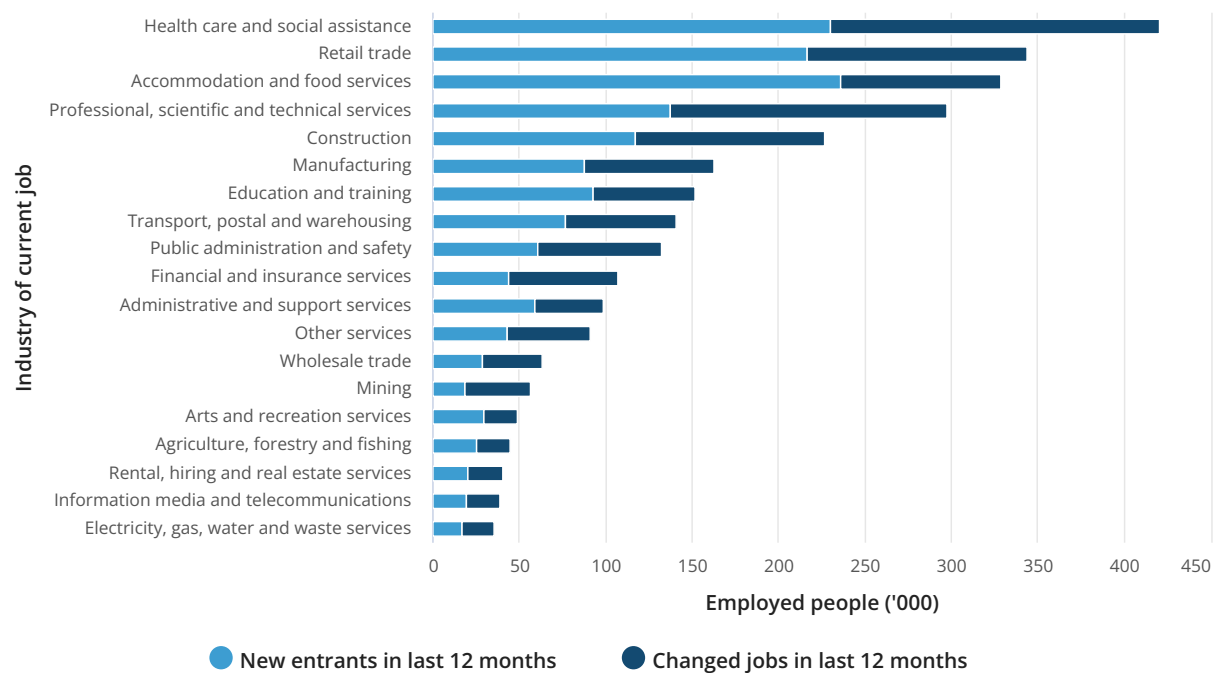
- Never worked before and started their first job,
- Started a new job after leaving or losing a previous job from more than 12 months ago, and
- Resumed a held job or returned to a previous job after a period of absence (and reported their current duration of employment from their restart date).

New entrants were evenly split between men (750,000) and women (810,000). 80 per cent of new entrants were aged under 45 years with 36 per cent aged 15 to 24 years.

The industries with the most new entrants were:

- Accommodation and food services - 236,000
- Health care and social assistance - 230,000
- Retail trade - 216,000
- Professional, scientific and technical services - 137,000
- Construction - 117,000

**Chart 2: People who started their current job in the last 12 months**

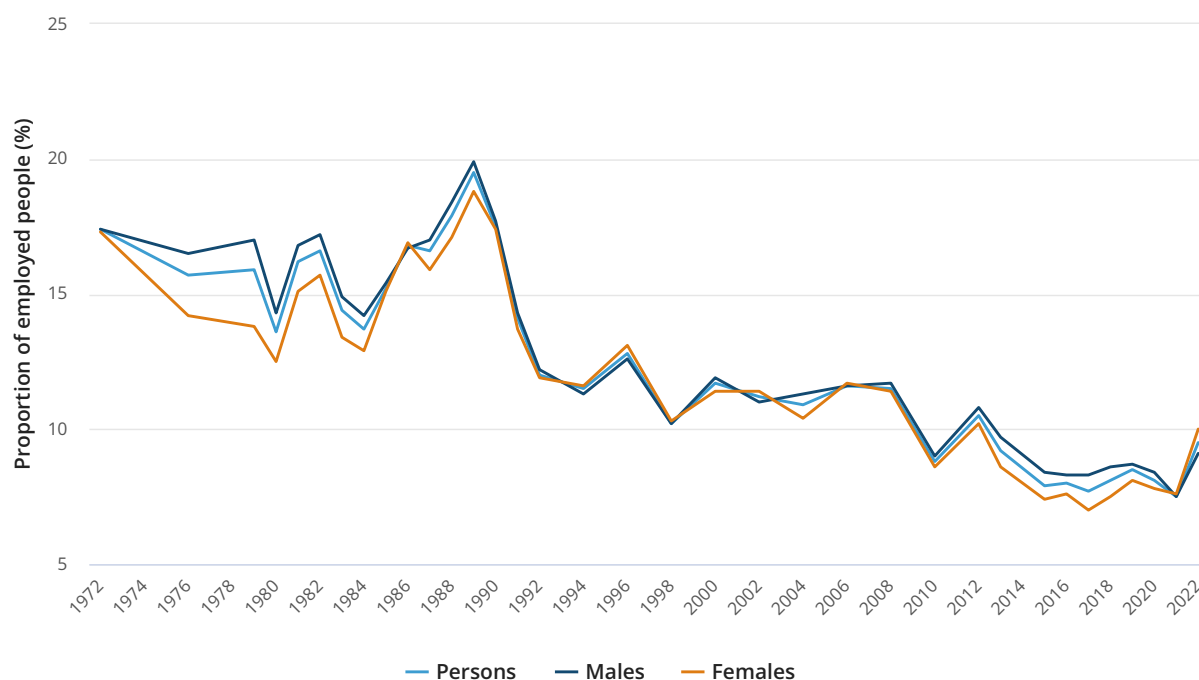


## Job mobility

1.3 million people changed jobs during the year ending February 2022, equating to a job mobility rate of 9.5 per cent of all employed people changing jobs during the year. This was the highest rate of job mobility since 2012 in the annual series, higher than the previous estimate for the year ending February 2021 (7.5 per cent) and slightly lower than the year

ending February 2012 (10.5 per cent).

Chart 3: Employed people who changed jobs during the year



Note: 2015 to 2022 data are available from Table 01 in the data downloads section below. Pre-2015 historical data can be found in the 2018 release of [Participation, Job Search and Mobility \(https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6226.0Main+Features1February%202018?OpenDocument\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6226.0Main+Features1February%202018?OpenDocument) publication.

## State and territory

The states and territories with the highest rate of job mobility were:

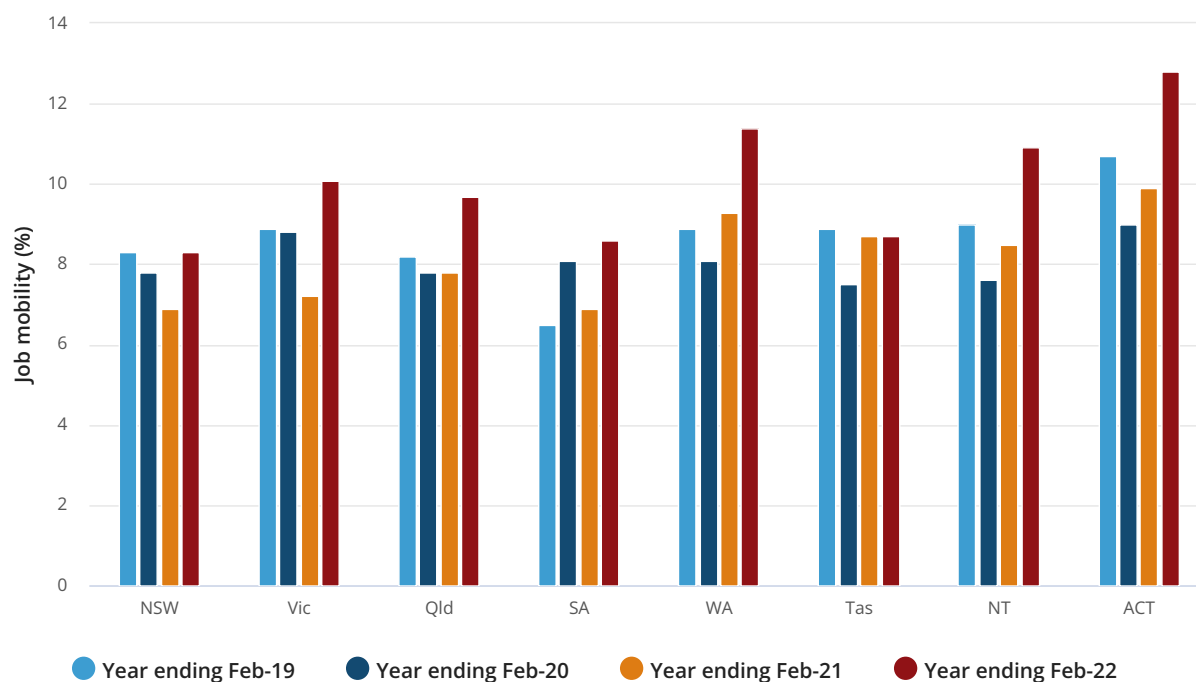
- Australian Capital Territory - 12.8 per cent.
- Western Australia - 11.4 per cent.
- Northern Territory - 10.9 per cent.

The states and territories with the greatest increase in job mobility between the year ending February 2021 and the year ending February 2022 were:

- Australian Capital Territory - up 2.9 percentage points (from 9.9 per cent to 12.8 per cent).

- Victoria - up 2.9 points (from 7.2 per cent to 10.1 per cent).
- Northern Territory - up 2.4 points (from 8.5 per cent to 10.9 per cent).

Chart 4: Job mobility by state and territory



Note:

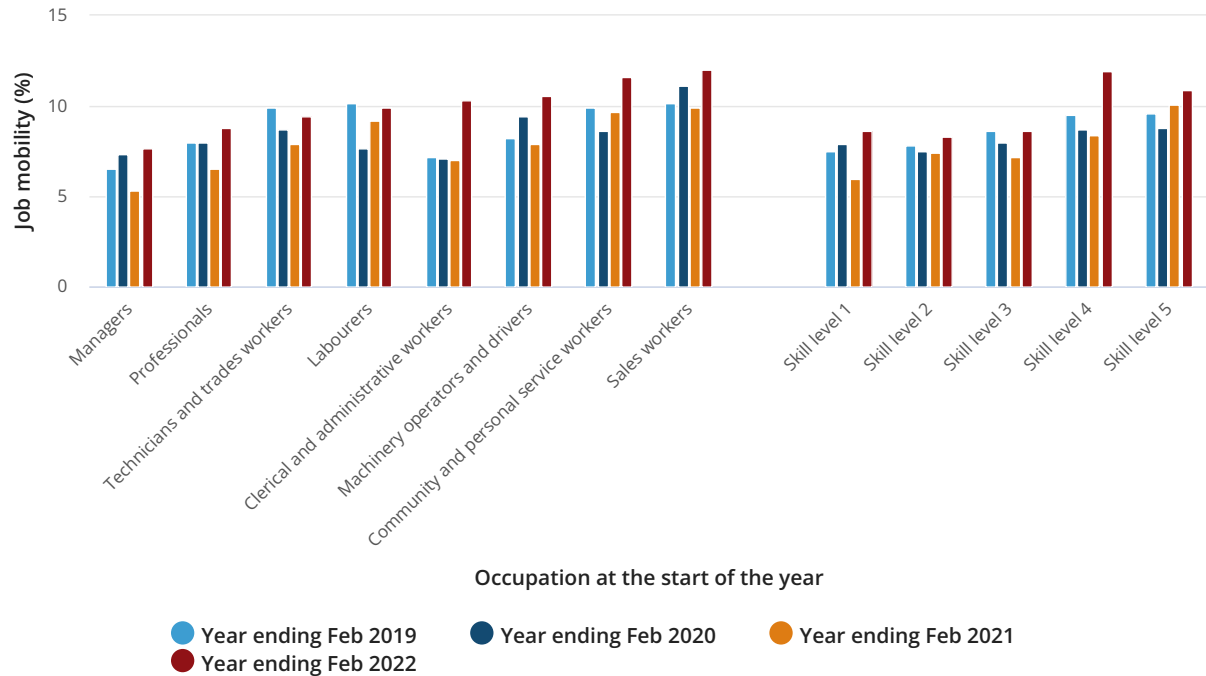
- Job mobility is the number of people who changed jobs during the year as a proportion of people who were employed at the end of the year

## Change in occupation

Job mobility rose in all eight of the major occupation groups. The largest rises were for:

- Clerical and administrative workers (7.0 per cent to 10.3 per cent).
- Machinery operators and drivers (7.9 per cent to 10.6 per cent).
- Managers (5.3 per cent to 7.7 per cent).
- Professionals (6.5 per cent to 8.8 per cent).

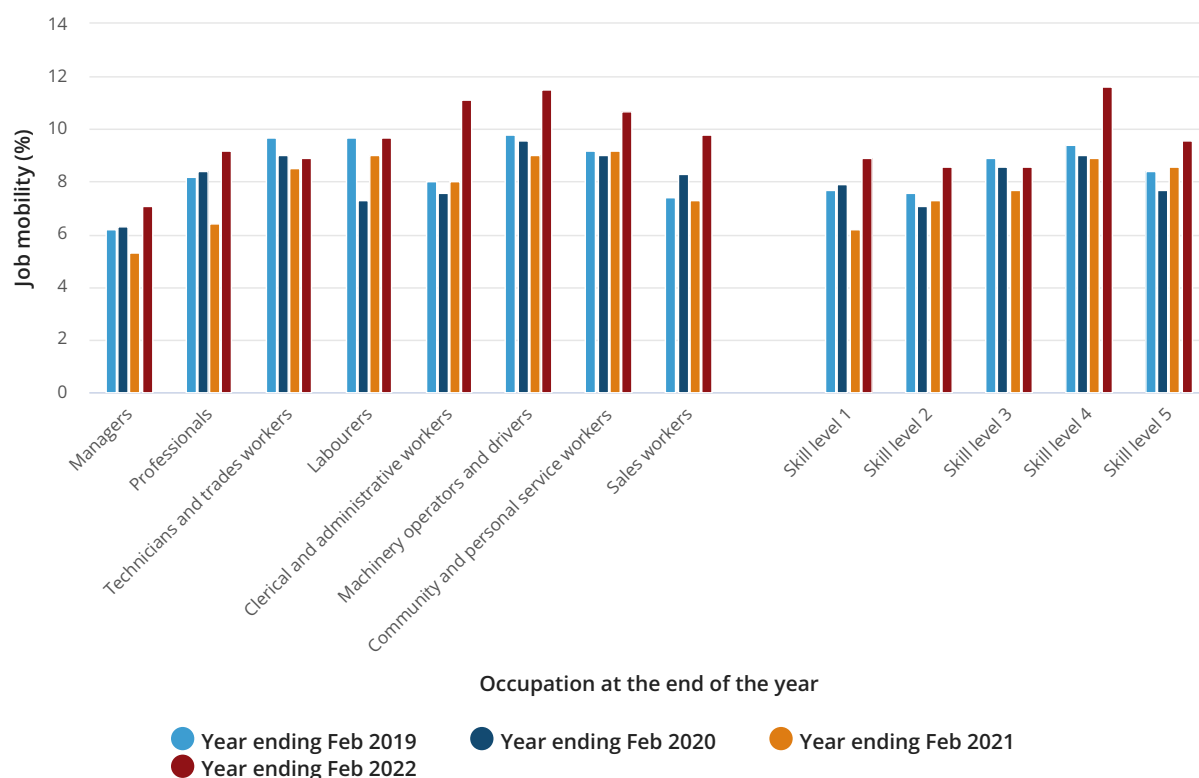
Chart 5a: Job mobility by occupation that was left



Note:

- The occupation at the end of the year is not necessarily the same as the occupation at the start of the year, as people can change occupations when they change jobs. See Chart 5b for an alternative view of job mobility that groups people by their occupation at the end of the year (i.e. the occupation they entered when changing jobs).

Chart 5b: Job mobility by occupation that was entered



As in previous years, Professionals made up the largest share of people who changed jobs. While job mobility within the Professional occupation group had the second lowest rate at 8.8 per cent, Professionals made up the largest share of total employment at 26.5 per cent. This equated to 280,000 professionals who changed jobs during the year ending February 2022, which was a 22.3 per cent share of all people who changed jobs, up from 20.7 per cent in the previous year. The next largest share was Clerical and administrative workers at 12.8 per cent, up from 11.2 per cent in the previous year. Machinery operators and drivers had the smallest share (5.9 per cent of job mobility, remaining steady from the previous year).



Chart 6a: People who changed jobs by occupation that was left

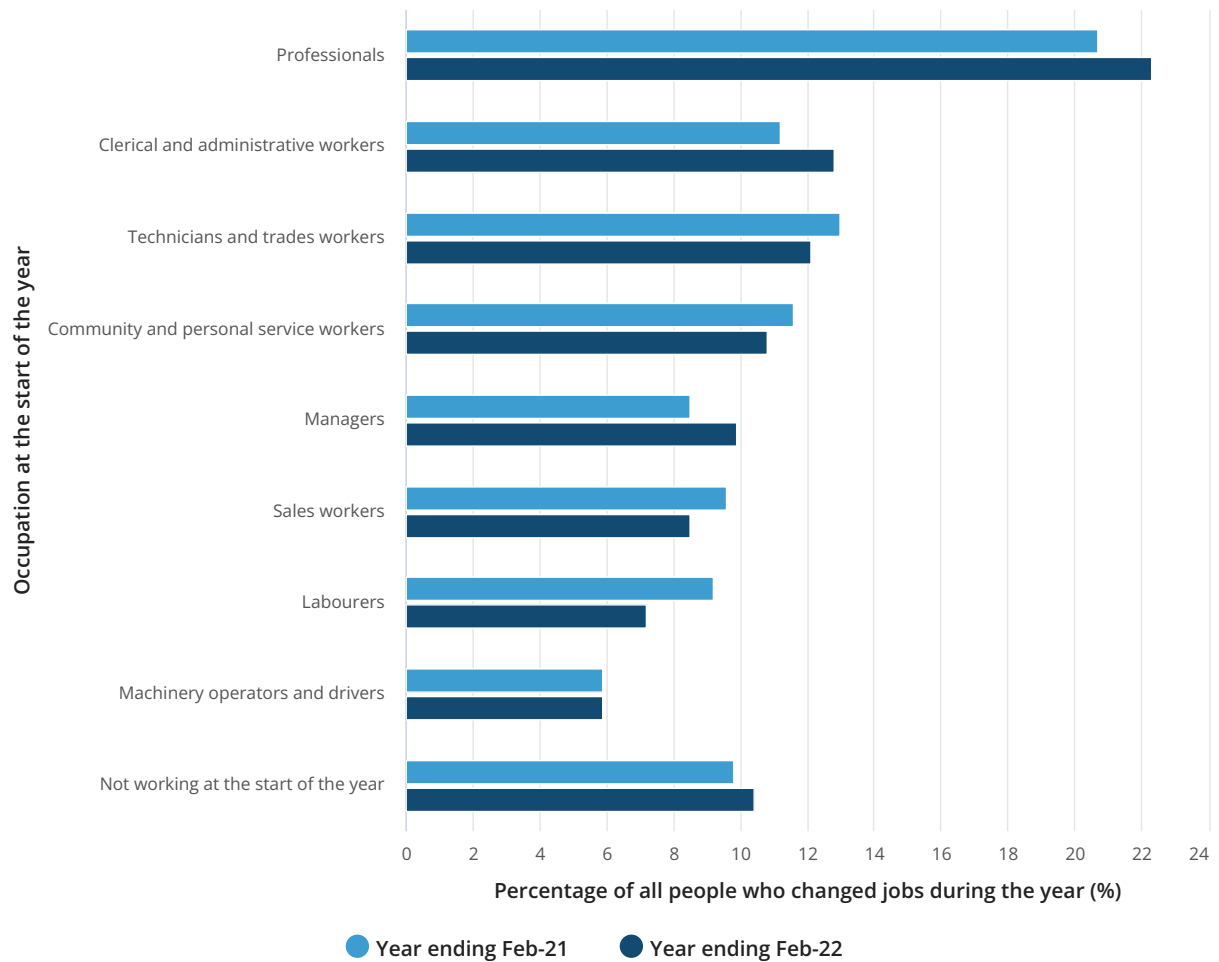
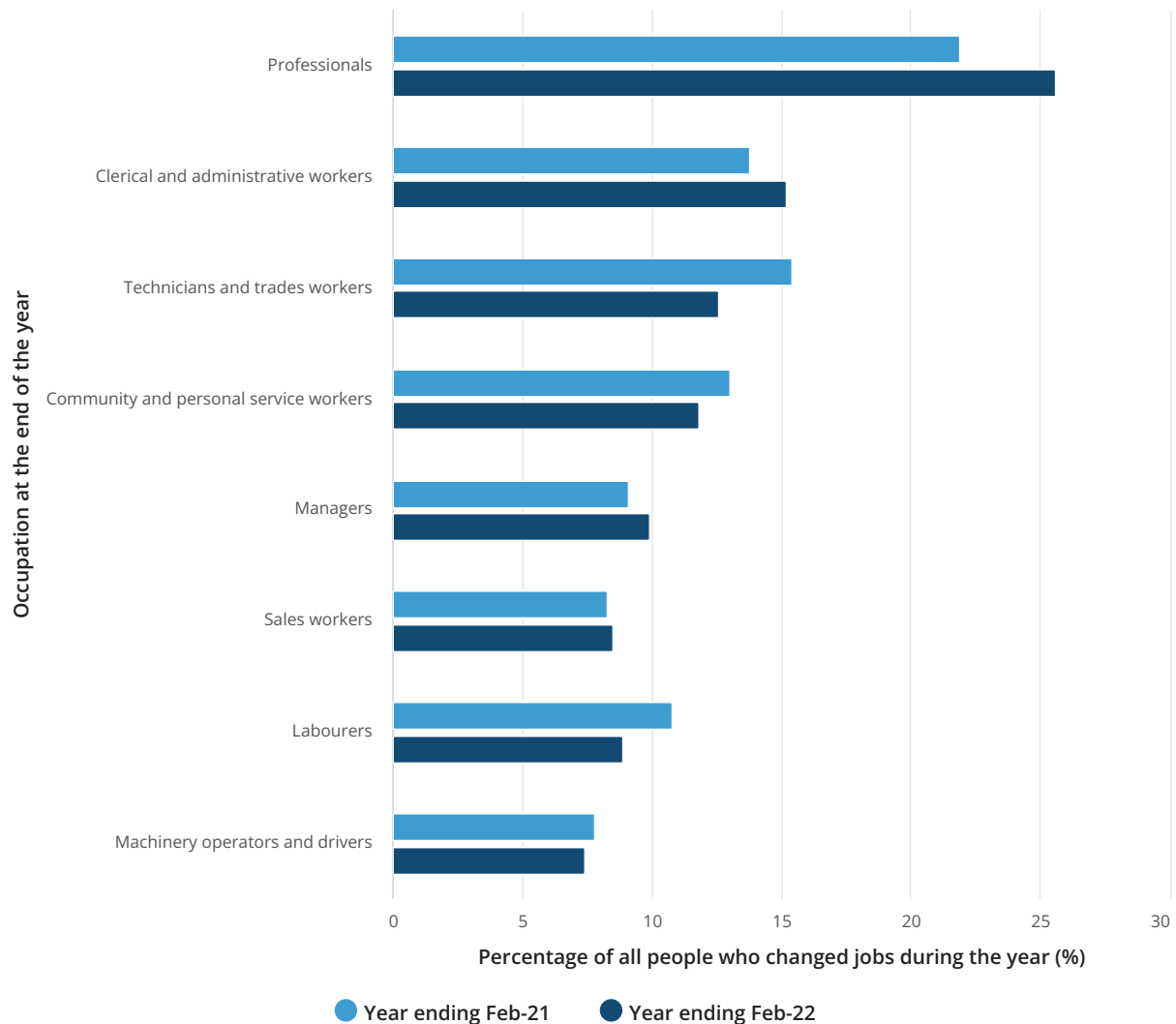


Chart 6b: People who changed jobs by occupation that was entered

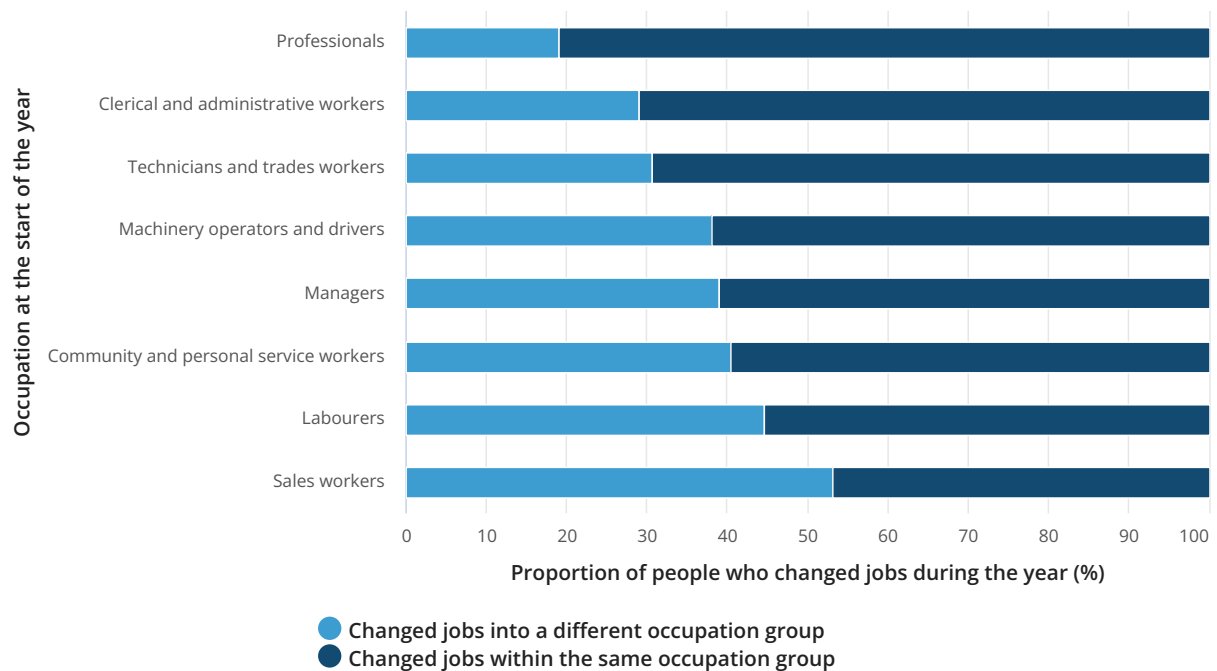


Most employees (94 per cent) who remained employed in their main job for a year or longer had no change in occupation with their current employer during the 12 months ending February 2022.

Of the 1.3 million people who changed jobs in the last year, 60 per cent (758,000) were working in the same major occupation group as they were at the start of the year. Sales workers were the only occupation group who had a higher proportion of people who

changed jobs into a different major occupation group (53 per cent) than in the same major occupation group (47 per cent).

Chart 7: Changed jobs to a different occupation



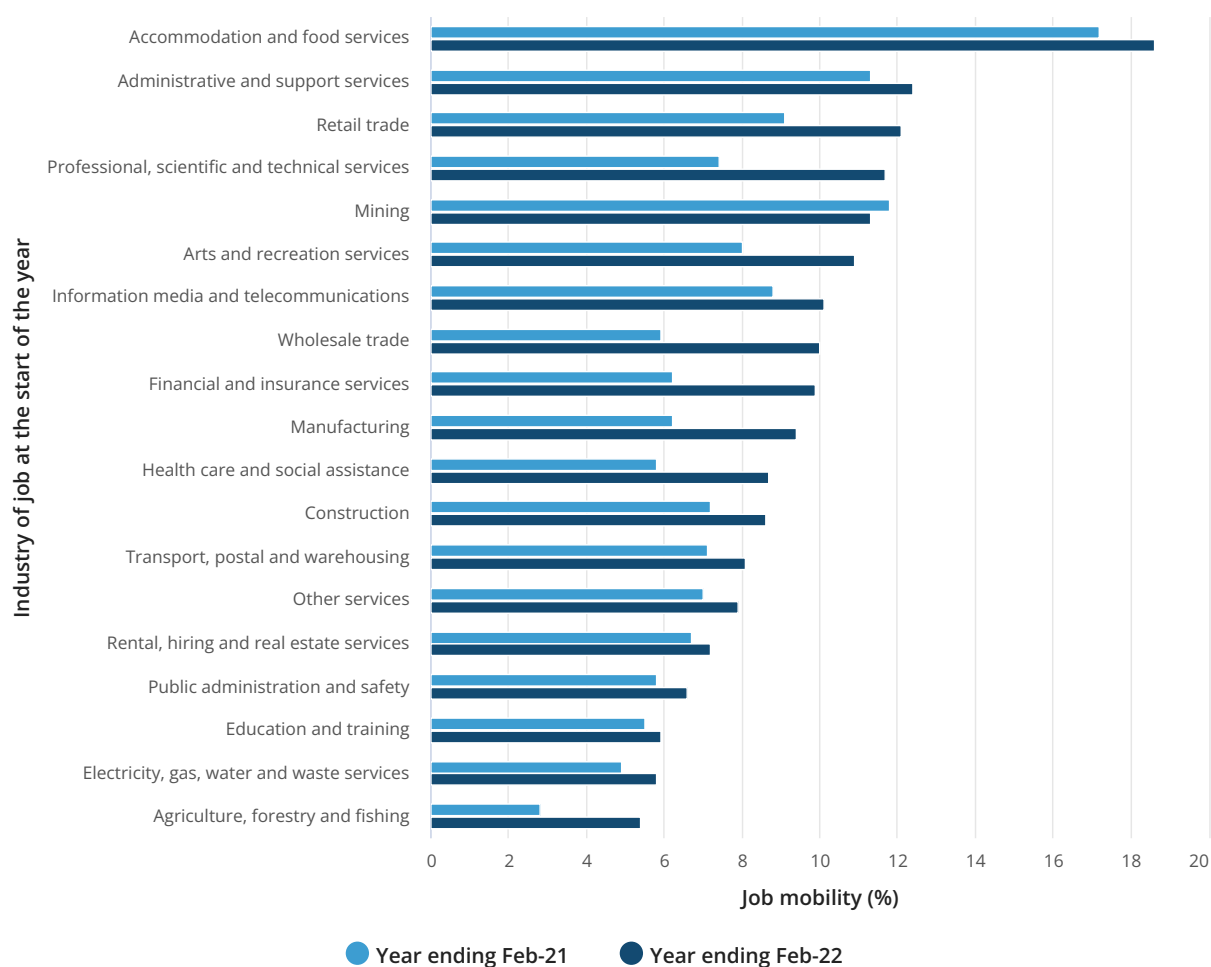
## Change in industry

Job mobility rose in almost all the major industries, with the largest increases in:

- Professional, scientific and technical services (7.4 per cent to 11.7 per cent),
- Wholesale trade (5.9 per cent to 10.0 per cent).

The only industry that saw a decrease in job mobility was mining (11.8 per cent to 11.3 per cent), which indicates fewer people were leaving the mining industry.

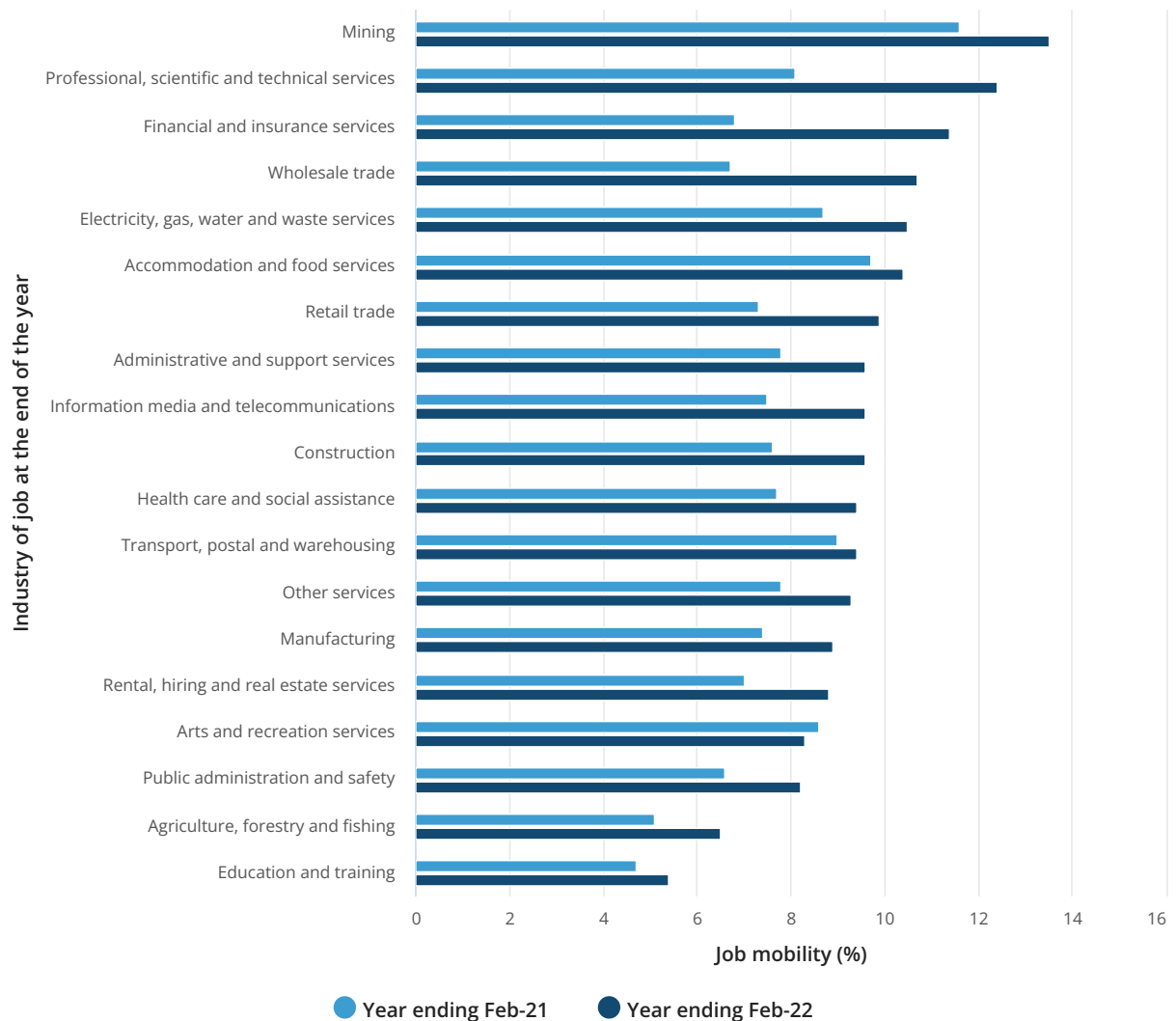
## Chart 8a: Job mobility by industry of job that was left



Note:

- The industry at the end of the year is not necessarily the same as the industry at the start of the year, as people can change industries when they change jobs. See Chart 8b for an alternative view of job mobility that groups people by their industry at the end of the year (i.e. the industry they entered when changing jobs).

## Chart 8b: Job mobility by industry of job that was entered



The Health care and social assistance industry accounted for the largest share of people who changed jobs in the year ending February 2022 (12.2 per cent). This was followed by Professional, scientific and technical services (10.4 per cent), Retail trade (10.4 per cent) and Accommodation and food services (10.3 per cent).

Chart 9a: People who changed jobs by industry of job that was left

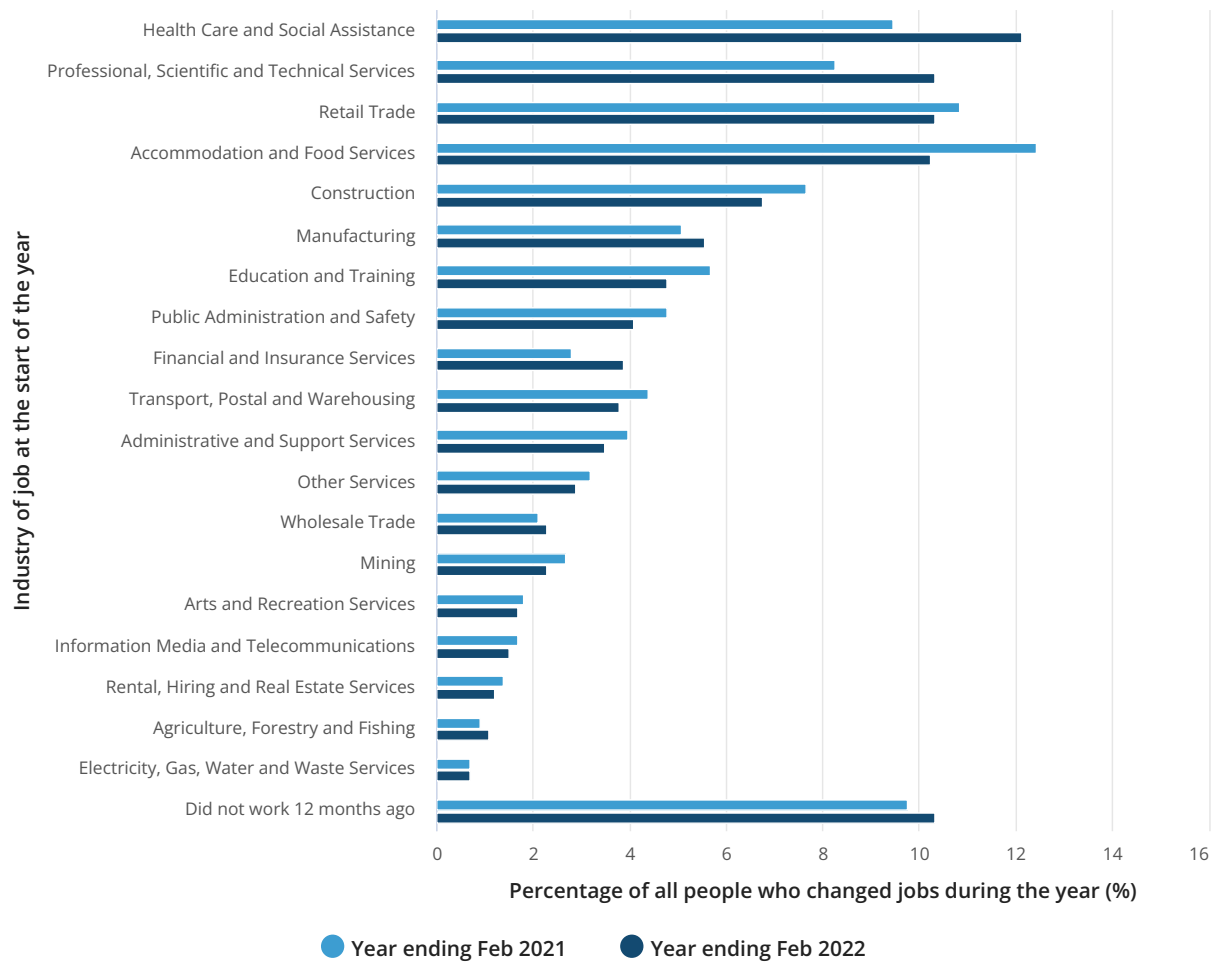
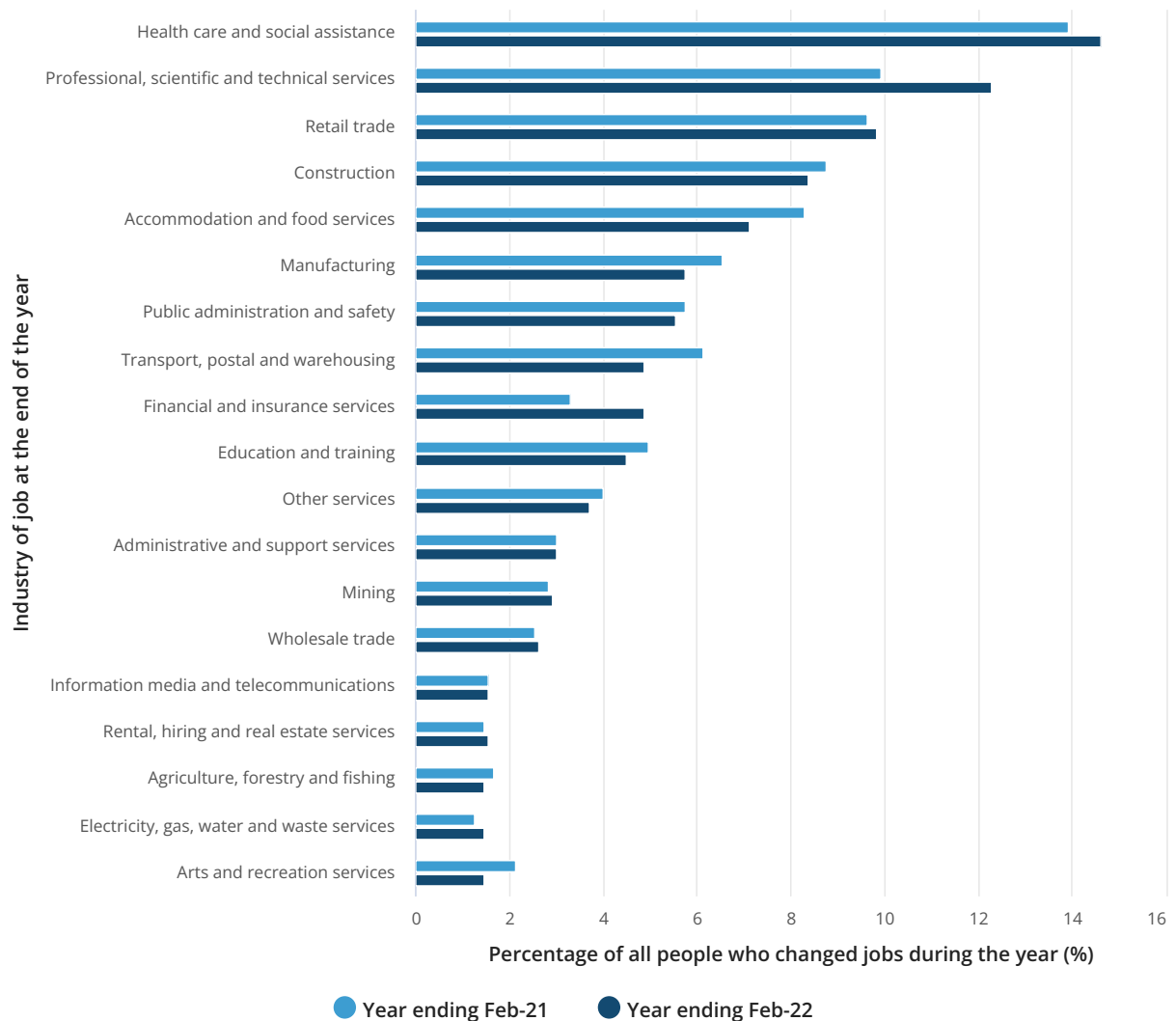


Chart 9b: People who changed jobs by industry of job that was entered



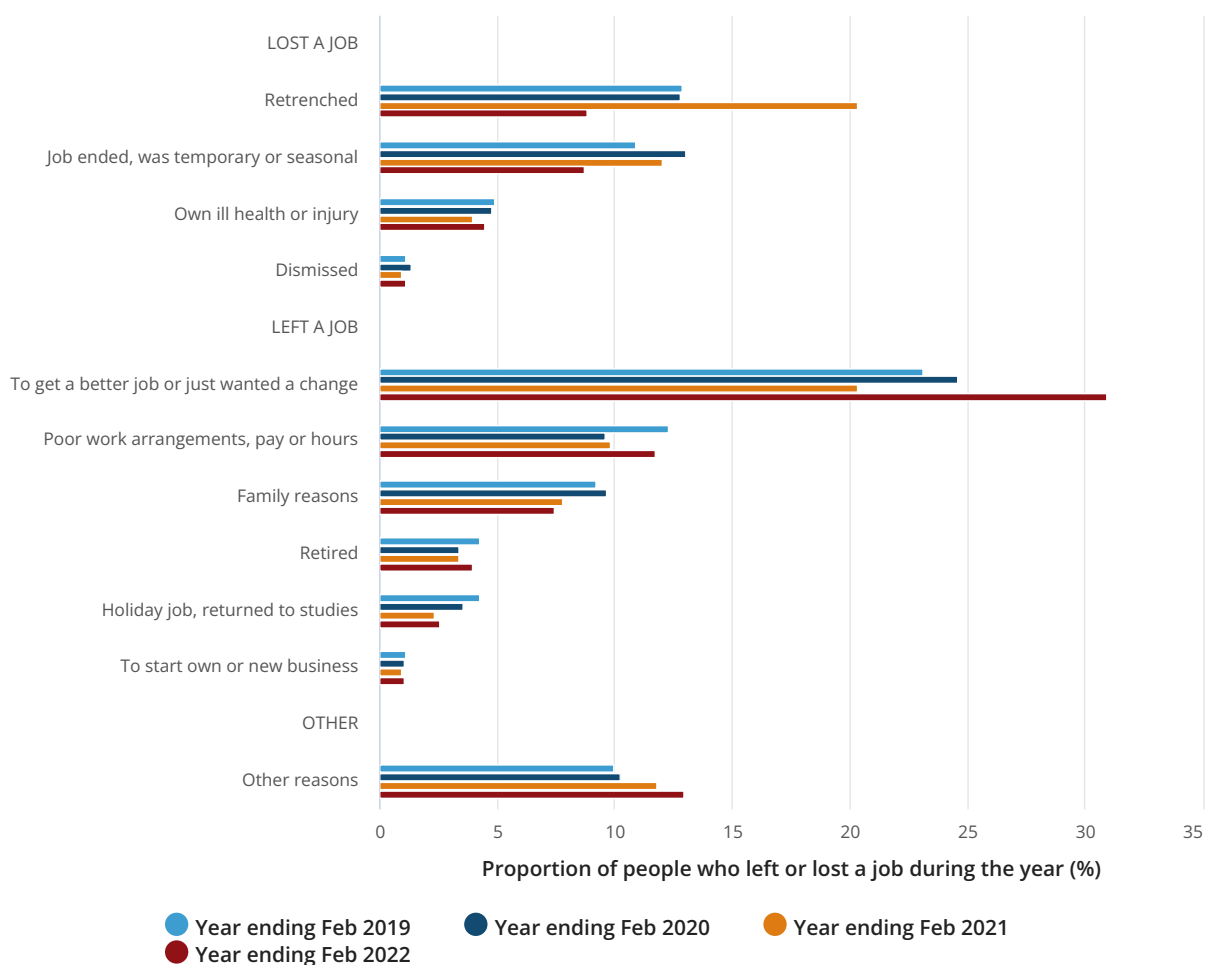
## Left or lost a job

There were 2.1 million people in February 2022 who left or lost a job in the previous 12 months, up from 1.8 million in February 2021. 1 in 10 of these people (9.4 per cent, or 199,000 people) were retrenched, which is a record low for the series, but it follows a high number of retrenchments during the pandemic in the previous year ending February 2021

(21.7 per cent, or 392,300 people).

A third (33 per cent) of all people who left or lost a job in the 12 months to February 2022 were people who left a job to obtain a better job or just wanted a change (697,100), up from 21.7 per cent in February 2021.

Chart 10: Main reason left or lost a job



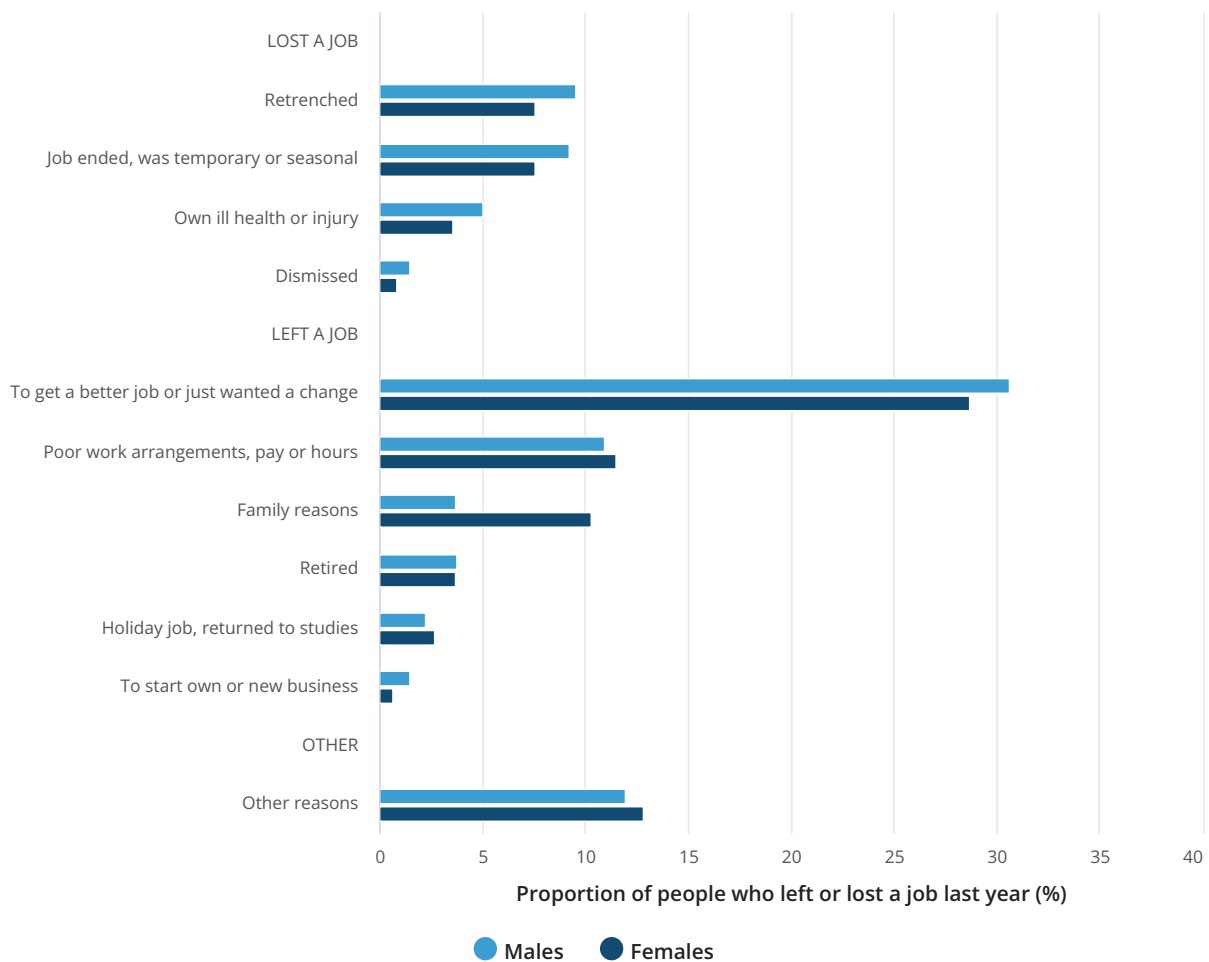
Note:

- Owner managers whose businesses closed down for economic reasons are included in "Retrenched"
- Owner managers whose businesses closed down or were sold for other reasons are included in "Other reasons"



More males than females reported being retrenched last year (10.6 per cent and 8.4 per cent). The most common reason people left a job was to get a better job or just wanted a change, (34.1 per cent for males and 32.0 per cent for females). A higher percentage of females reported leaving a job for family reasons than males, (11.5 per cent and 4.1 per cent).

Chart 11: Main reason left or lost a job by sex



Note:

- Owner managers whose businesses closed down for economic reasons are included in "Retrenched"
- Owner managers whose businesses closed down or were sold for other reasons are included in "Other reasons"

## Retrenchments

The annual retrenchment rate is the number of people who were retrenched in a given year as a proportion of the number of people who were employed at the start of that year. In the year ending February 2022, the retrenchment rate was 1.5 per cent, which is the lowest annual rate on record. This follows from a high retrenchment rate in the previous year ending February 2021 of 3.0 per cent. The highest retrenchment rate on record was 7.2 per cent in the year ending February 1991.

Chart 12: Annual retrenchment rate



## Data downloads

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### Table 1: Labour mobility, retrenchments and duration of employment

↓ [Download XLSX](#)

[849.86 KB]

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### Table 2: Retrenchments and other reasons for ceasing a job last year

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[4.52 MB]

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### Table 3: Changes in employment characteristics of people employed last year

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### Table 4: Separations and other changes in employment of people employed last year by industry

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### Table 5: Engagements and other changes in employment of people employed last year by industry

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### Table 6: Separations and other changes in employment of people employed last year by occupation

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### Table 7: Engagements and other changes in employment of people employed last year by occupation

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### All tables

↓ [Download ZIP](#)

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### Relative standard errors, Tables 1 to 7

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## Previous catalogue number

This release uses ABS catalogue number 6223.0\*.

Data from this release was previously published in:

- [Participation, Job Search and Mobility \(https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour](https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour)

[/employment-and-unemployment/participation-job-search-and-mobility-australia\)](#) (6226.0\*\*), 2015-2020.

- [Persons Not In the Labour Force, Underemployed Workers and Job Search Experience](#) (<https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/ProductsbyCatalogue/BBB46A2E9C441282CA257DF40079A913?OpenDocument>) (6226.0.55.001), 2014.
- [Labour Mobility](#) (<https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/second+level+view?ReadForm&prodno=6209.0&viewtitle=Labour%20Mobility,%20Australia~February%202013~Latest~21/08/2013&&tabname=Past%20Future%20Issues&prodno=6209.0&issue=February%202013&num=&view=&>) (6209.0), 1972-2013.
- [Career Experience](#) (<https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/second+level+view?ReadForm&prodno=6254.0&viewtitle=Career%20Experience,%20Australia~Nov%202002~Latest~22/09/2003&&tabname=Past%20Future%20Issues&prodno=6254.0&issue=Nov%202002&num=&view=&>) (6254.0), 1993-2002.
- [Retrenchment and Redundancy](#) (<https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/second+level+view?ReadForm&prodno=6266.0&viewtitle=Retrenchment%20and%20Redundancy,%20Australia~Jul%202001~Latest~02/08/2002&&tabname=Past%20Future%20Issues&prodno=6266.0&issue=Jul%202001&num=&view=&>) (6266.0), 1997-2001.
- [Persons Who Had Re-entered The Labour Force](#) (<https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/second+level+view?ReadForm&prodno=6264.0&viewtitle=Persons%20Who%20Had%20Re-entered%20The%20Labour%20Force,%20Australia~Jul%201995~Latest~01/02/1996&&tabname=Past%20Future%20Issues&prodno=6264.0&issue=Jul%201995&num=&view=&>) (6264.0), 1985-1995
- [Persons Who Have Left The Labour Force](#) (<https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/second+level+view?ReadForm&prodno=6267.0&viewtitle=Persons%20Who%20Have%20Left%20The%20Labour%20Force,%20Australia~Sep%201994~Latest~02/04/1995&&tabname=Past%20Future%20Issues&prodno=6267.0&issue=Sep%201994&num=&view=&>) (6267.0), 1985-1994
- [Labour Turnover](#) (<https://archive.org/details/australian-statistics?and%5B%5D=subject%3A%22Labour+Turnover%22&sort=-date>) (6210.0), 1949-1976.

\* Note: Catalogue number 6223.0 was previously used for [Family Status and Employment Status of the Population, Nov 1974-75](#) (<https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/productsbyCatalogue/F926FA92D780E58ACA2585AA008276FA?OpenDocument>).

\*\* Note: Catalogue number 6226.0 was previously used for [School Leavers, 1970 to 1974: their Employment Status and Education Experience, May 1975](#) (<https://archive.org/details/62260-1975-05>).

## Methodology

[Participation, Job Search and Mobility, Australia methodology, February 2022](#)